

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-10 OMB-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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R 160940Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3055

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY DELHI

USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 3068

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, SN

SUBJECT: ROK VICE FONMIN'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE

REF: SINGAPORE 2550

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN WHAT APPEARS TO BE A SHIFT TOWARD A MORE PRO-ROK POLICY, VISITING ROK VICE FONMIN LHO SAID FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM INFORMED HIM THAT GOS IS PREPARED TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH. THIS WOULD INVOLVE RAISING ROK CONSULATE GENERAL IN SINGAPORE TO AN EMBASSY. ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD REQUIRE CABINET APPROVAL, RAJA FELT THIS WOULD POSE NO PROBLEM. DPRK WOULD BE OFFERED SIMILAR STATUS, BUT GOS WOULD NOT ALLOW DPRK TO BLOCK UPGRADING GOS-ROK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. RAJARTNAM ALSO AGREED TO SUPPORT POSITION AT LIMA THAT NAC SHOULD EITHER ADMIT BOTH KOREAS OR REFUSE BOTH AND SAID HE WOULD SPEAK IN FAVOR OF THIS POSITION. RAJA WAS SYMPATHETIC BUT NONCOMMITTAL WITH RESPECT
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TO FRIENDLY RESOLUTION ON KOREA AT FORTHCOMING UNGA. HOWEVER, LHO WAS CONFIDENT THAT IF DPRK FAILED TO OBTAIN NAC CONSENSUS IN FAVOR OF ITS POSITION, GOS WOULD QUIETLY SUPPORT FRIENDLY RESOLUTION AT UNGA. END SUMMARY.

1. VISITING ROK VICE FOREIGN MINISTER LHO SIN-YONG BRIEFED ME JULY 15 ON HIS MEETING EARLIER SAME DAY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM. LHO APPEARED QUITE ELATED WITH RESULTS OF MEETING AND INDICATED RAJARATNAM HAD BEEN FAR MORE POSITIVE THAN HE HAD EXPECTED. LHO SAID HE RAISED THREE SUBJECTS, STATUS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, GOS POSITION AT LIMA NAC MEETING AND FRIENDLY RESOLUTION ON KOREA AT FORTHCOMING UNGA.

2. BILATERAL RELATIONS. LHO SAID ROK ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS HAD RAISED WITH GOS QUESTION OF UPGRADING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS INVOLVING RAISING OF ROK CONSULATE GENERAL IN SINGAPORE TO AN EMBASSY. ALTHOUGH ROK HAD ALWAYS MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT ASSUMED GOS WOULD ALSO DECIDE TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA AT SAME TIME, GOS HAD ALWAYS TURNED REQUEST ASIDE ON GROUND THAT THE TIME WAS NOT PROPITIOUS. HOWEVER, ON THIS OCCASION RAJARATNAM REACTED POSITIVELY AND PROMISED HE WOULD SUBMIT A FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET. RAJA WAS CONFIDENT CABINET WOULD POSE NO OBJECTION AND THAT ANNOUNCEMENT RAISING ROK CONSULATE GENERAL TO AN EMBASSY WOULD BE MADE BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH. RAJA INDICATED GOS WOULD OFFER DPRK SIMILAR STATUS.

3. LHO SAID HE ASKED RAJA WHETHER GOS WOULD STILL BE WILLING TO PROCEED WITH THIS ACTION IF NORTH KOREA WERE OPPOSED AND/OR DID NOT AGREE TO UPGRADE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GOS AT THIS TIME, RAJA REPLIED THAT ASSUMING CABINET AGREED GOS WOULD BE PREPARED TO GO AHEAD AND ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK DESPITE DPRK OPPOSITION OR UNWILLINGNESS TO CONCLUDE A SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT. RAJA NOTED THAT A NORTH KOREAN MINISTER WOULD BE VISITING SINGAPORE SOMETIME AFTER SINGAPORE'S NATIONAL DAY (AUGUST 9). HOWEVER, LHO WAS QUITE SURE FROM RAJA'S REMARKS THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT UPGRADING ROK-GOS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WOULD NOT AWAIT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE NORTH KOREAN MINISTER, BUT WOULD BE MADE BEFORE THE END OF JULY. THERE WAS APPARENTLY NO DISCUSSION OF GOS REPRESENTATION IN SEOUL.

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4. LIMA CONFERENCE. LHO SAID HE REVIEWED AT SOME LENGTH ROK POSITION WITH RESPECT TO LIMA CONFERENCE, AND ASKED (A) THAT GOS TAKE POSITION THAT NAC SHOULD EITHER ADMIT BOTH KOREAS OR REFUSE BOTH, BUT THAT IT SHOULD NOT ACCEPT ONE WITHOUT ALSO ACCEPTING THE OTHER, AND (B) THAT RAJARATNAM (WHO PLANS TO ATTEND NAC) SPEAK IN FAVOR OF THIS POSITION. HE SAID THAT RAJA AGREED TO BOTH REQUESTS.

5. KOREAN RESOLUTION AT UNGA. LHO SAID HE EXPLAINED FRIENDLY RESOLUTION, NOTED COUNTRIES WHICH WERE CO-SPONSORING AND SUPPORTING IT AND URGED GOS SUPPORT. HE SAID RAJA APPEARED SYMPATHETIC AND PROMISED TO CONSIDER THE MATTER CAREFULLY. LHO COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT THERE WAS EXCELLENT CHANCE THIS YEAR, DESPITE

GOS ABSECTIONS ON KOREAN ISSUE IN PAST, THAT IF DPRK FAILED AT LIMA IN ITS EFFORTS TO EXCLUDE ROK FROM NAC, GOS WOULD SUPPORT FRIENDLY RESOLUTION AT UNGA.

6. LHO ASKED ME TO SUPPORT HIS REPRESENTATIONS ON THE LIMA CONFERENCE AND UNGA, AND ADVISE ROK CONSUL GENERAL GENERAL SOH IF I DETECTED ANY SIGNS OF SLIPPAGE IN GOS POSITION. I NOTED I HAD HAD ALREADY ONE CONVERSATION ON THE NAC MEETING IN WHICH GOS HAD BEEN SYMPATHETIC BUT NONCOMMITTAL (REFTEL, BUT I WOULD FOLLOW THIS UP WITH A SECOND APPROACH.

7. COMMENT: IF MINISTER LHO'S REPORT IS ACCURATE AND HE TOOK GREAT PAINS TO ASSURE ME THAT HIS ACCOUNT OF RAJARATNAM'S REMARKS WAS NOT AT ALL EXAGGERATED, IT WOULD CERTAINLY INDICATE A MUCH MORE FORTHRIGHT POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR ROK THAN GOS HAS BEEN WILLING TO GIVE IN THE PAST. IN MY NEXT CALL AT MFA I WILL REVIEW KOREAN QUESTION AGAIN IN ORDER TO SUPPORT LHO'S REPRESENTATIONS AND TO CONFIRM ACCURACY OF GOS POSITION OUTLINED ABOVE.
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